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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

REPORT ON THE FIFTY-SIXTH SESSION

(20 March - 28 April 2000)

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

OFFICIAL RECORDS, 2000

SUPPLEMENT No. 3A

UNITED NATIONS

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NOTE

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The report of the Commission on Human Rights on its fifty-sixth session has been issued as *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2000, Supplement No. 3* (E/2000/23-E/CN.4/2000/167).

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CONTENTS

	Paragraphs	Page
Administrative and programme budget implications of the draft resolution on the establishment of a permanent forum on indigenous issues	1 - 12	4
A. Request contained in the draft resolution	4	4
B. Activities by which the proposed request would be implemented	5	4
C. Additional requirement at full cost	6 - 7	5
D. Potential for absorption	8	6
E. Contingency fund	9 - 12	6

Administrative and programme budget implications of the draft resolution on the establishment of a permanent forum on indigenous issues

1. This addendum is submitted in accordance with the provisions contained in paragraph 4 of annex IV of the report of the Commission on its fifty-sixth session, and contains a statement by the Secretary-General pursuant to rule 31 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council. Paragraph 4 of annex IV indicated that the addendum would include the statements on administrative and programme budget implications in respect of those resolutions and decisions adopted by the Commission in 2000 which would entail additional requirements.

2. At its fifty-sixth session, the Commission adopted a number of new mandates, or expanded existing mandates of a perennial nature, for which resources have been included in the draft programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001.[1] Furthermore, the Commission terminated one mandate of a perennial nature.

3. The Commission also took a number of decisions regarding other activities which were not of a perennial nature. A review of these decisions shows that all but one could be implemented within the resources approved for section 22 (Human rights) in the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001. The exception concerns draft resolution 3 on the establishment of a permanent forum on indigenous issues,[2] which the Commission recommends for adoption by the Economic and Social Council. The implementation of that draft resolution would entail additional requirements as described below.

A. Request contained in the draft resolution

4. Under the terms of draft resolution 3, the Commission would recommend that the Council decide to establish a permanent forum on indigenous issues as a subsidiary organ of the Council, consisting of 16 members, all serving in their personal capacity as independent experts on indigenous issues for a period of three years with the possibility of re-election or reappointment for one further period. It would further recommend, inter alia, to the Council that it decide that the permanent forum would hold an annual session of 10 working days at the United Nations Office at Geneva or at United Nations Headquarters or such other place as the permanent forum may decide in accordance with existing financial rules and regulations of the United Nations. Finally, the Commission would also recommend that the Council decide that the financing of the permanent forum shall be provided from within existing resources through the regular budget of the United Nations and its specialized agencies and through such voluntary contributions as may be donated.

B. Activities by which the proposed request would be implemented

5. The activities envisaged under the draft resolution would consist of one trip per year by the 16 members of the permanent forum to Geneva or New York, and one trip per year by two Professional staff of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to New York, in the event that the session of the permanent forum is held there.

C. Additional requirements at full cost

6. The implementation of the proposed request would entail the following annual requirements:

Section 22 (Human rights)

	Permanent forum held (in United States dollars per year)	
	Geneva	New York
(a) Travel of independent experts to attend the permanent forum (16 members)	114 800	145 500
(b) Travel of the staff of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2 Professional staff - support staff to be provided by New York)	N/A	10 800
Total	**114 800**	**156 300**

Section 2 (General Assembly affairs and conference services)

	Permanent forum held (in United States dollars per year)	
	Geneva	New York
(a) Meetings services	116 200	133 900
(b) Pre-session documentation	229 400	235 200
(c) In-session documentation	92 800	93 300
(d) Post-session documentation	136 900	140 600
(e) Other requirements	6 700	12 000
Total	**582 000**	**615 000**

7. Should the draft resolution be adopted, it should be noted that the provision regarding the location of the annual sessions of the permanent forum, would imply an exception to the general principle set out in paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 40/243 of 18 December 1985. In that paragraph, the Assembly reaffirmed that United Nations bodies shall plan to meet at their respective established headquarters. In accordance with this principle, the meetings of the permanent forum should be held in Geneva. Furthermore should the permanent forum be held at other locations than Geneva or New York, related requirements and provisions would be covered through a host country agreement arrangement in accordance with Assembly resolution 40/243.

D. Potential for absorption

8. Should the Economic and Social Council adopt the draft resolution and decide that the first meeting of the permanent forum would be held in 2001, the possibilities for absorption of the additional requirements would be as follows:

(a) The estimates for conference services of $582,000 in Geneva and $615,000 in New York have been calculated at full cost and are based on the assumption that no part of the conference-servicing requirements would be met from within the permanent conference-servicing capacity approved under section 2 of the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001. Provision, however, has been included under that section, not only for meetings programmed at the time of the preparation of the budget, but also for meetings which might be authorized subsequently, provided that the number and distribution of meetings and conferences are consistent with the pattern of meetings of past years. As a result, no additional resources would be required under section 2 of the approved programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001;

(b) No provision was included in the approved programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 regarding the requirements for travel costs and daily subsistence allowance to be met under section 22. It is not anticipated, at this stage, that these requirements could be met from the resources appropriated by the General Assembly under that section.

E. Contingency fund

9. It will be recalled that, under the procedures established by the General Assembly in its resolutions 41/213 of 19 December 1986 and 42/211 of 21 December 1987, a contingency fund is established for each biennium to accommodate additional expenditures derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the programme budget. Under this procedure, if additional expenditures are proposed that exceed the resources available from the contingency fund, the activities concerned can be implemented only through redeployment of resources from low-priority areas or modifications of existing activities. Otherwise, such additional activities will have to be deferred to a later biennium.

10. No activities could be identified, at this stage, for termination, deferral, curtailment or modification under section 22 of the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 in order to accommodate the additional requirements of $114,800 or $156,300, if the permanent forum were to be held in Geneva or New York, respectively.

11. Should the Economic and Social Council adopt the draft resolution and decide that the first session of the permanent forum would be held in 2001, an additional provision of $114,800 (if the permanent forum were to be held in Geneva) or $156,300 (if it were to be held in New York) would be required over and above the resources included in section 22 of the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001. The provision would represent a charge against the contingency fund and as such would require a related additional appropriation.

12. Should the Economic and Social Council adopt the draft resolution and decide that the first session of the permanent forum would be held in 2002 instead, the requirements for that session would be included in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003.

Notes

[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 6* (A/54/6/Rev.1)

[2] For the text, see *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council,2000, Supplement No. 3* (E/2000/23-E/CN.4/2000/167), chap. I, sect. A.

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